

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

### **1.**

#### **Findings of the Study Commission**

After a thorough study of the Town government including discussions with numerous citizens before, during, and after several public hearings and a review of almost 300 Surveys, the Study Commission found that:

(1) Overwhelmingly, citizens are frustrated with the current form, Commission-Mayor, of government. It was found that citizens feel disenfranchised by the current form of government, feeling as if they have no power or voice when issues need to be addressed or resolved.

(2) The majority of citizens that completed the survey requested to make changes to the current form of city government.

(3) The frustration with the current form of government was key to City employees voting to join the Union for the first time since the City of Hardin was formed.

Additionally, City employees were reluctant to speak to Commission members for fear of retaliation following the Mayor's firing of a long time City employee.

(4) Citizen's are upset about how the City spends money (waste) and the constant increases in taxes and fee's, particularly in the lighting and street maintenance districts, in addition to the record number of lawsuits having been filed against the City in the past year.

(5) Overwhelmingly, citizens feel the administrators at City Hall are secretive and not forthcoming with information to them. The Study Commission found some merit in this concern as City administrators were unwilling to work with or provide, information to the commission readily.

### **2. Recommendation:**

In view of the findings, the Study Commission recommends that the City Manager form of government be listed on the November 8, 2016 ballot for voter consideration.

### **3. Key Provision of the Proposal:**

The key provision to the proposal is the addition of the City Manager form of government to the November 8, 2016 ballot.

### **4. Comparison of the Present and Proposed Forms of Government:**

The present form of government, as set forth in "Certificate A," below provides for the Commission-Mayor form of government.

The proposed form of government, as set forth in "Certificate B," before provides for the City Manager form of government.

All other structures and functions of the City of Hardin Government will remain unchanged.

May 11, 2016

To the Citizens of Hardin:

The Hardin Study Commission elected by the voters on November 4, 2014, thereafter appointed, present this final report to you, the citizens of Hardin.

The purpose of the study commission, as defined in state law, is "to study the existing form and powers of a local government and procedures for delivery of local government services and to compare them with other forms available under the laws of the state." After completing these two phases of the study it is the responsibility of the study commission to submit a final report recommending no change, or propose an amendment to the existing form of government or offer an alternative form of government to the qualified electors.

In every phase of this review this study commission sought advice and information from as many people in the town as possible. Opinions and recommendations were solicited from city employees and citizens. All meetings of the study commission were open to the public. Public hearings were held and a survey to gather information regarding citizen concerns was mailed.

Our recommendations reflect the thoughts and opinions of those who participated in public hearing, those who attended our regular meetings, and those who responded to a survey, in addition to the independent efforts of this study commission.

In this final report we present our unanimous recommendation for an alternative form of government that we feel will provide the governmental services expected by the people today and in the future. Our concern has been to provide a form of government that will be responsive to local citizens and provide the opportunity for devising solutions to local problems. We feel the citizens of the City of Hardin can achieve these goals by adopting the City Manager-Commission form with self-government powers.

The question of adopting alternative form of town government will be placed on the ballot November 8, 2016.



Eric Winburn, Chair  
City of Hardin Study Commission



Laurie Tschetter, Member  
City of Hardin Study Commission